



# "All the Men Behind the Opus Dei Curtain"

By [Randy Engel](#)

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## Introduction

"You can fool all the people some of the time,  
and some of the people all the time, but you  
cannot fool all the people all the time."

Abraham Lincoln

President Lincoln may or may not have uttered these words, but what is clear from E. Michael Jones' book *The Man Behind the Curtain – Michael Voris and the Homosexual Vortex* is that the author didn't believe them. Jones thought he could, indeed, fool all his readers all the time. And he almost succeeded.

Jones never mentions the words "Opus Dei" in his book on Michael Voris, nor does he identify any of the main characters as members or cooperators of Opus Dei, although he puts the two words in the mouth of Christine Niles, Editor-in-Chief of ChurchMilitantTV (CMTV) on one occasion when she **denies** that Voris has been funded or influenced by any outside group.

The truth is that every one of the main characters in Jones' book – Voris, Father Paul Nicholson, Marc Brammer, and the author himself – is tied to Opus Dei in a concrete way and that the Jones' tale is really a story of an Opus Dei media venture gone wrong.

Why the long delay in writing this exposé? After all, nearly a year has gone by since the e-book and magazine publication of *The Man Behind the Curtain* appeared in the late summer and fall of 2016. Unfortunately, I was mid-way through my investigation of the late Father Anthony Cipolla sex abuse case at the time and couldn't begin any new project until the New Year.

So, by the time you read my story, the dust has pretty much settled on the matter. The public battle has ended and both combatants have gone back to their respective corners, taken off their gloves and left the ring – Voris to Church Militant.com in Ferndale, Michigan and Jones to his Fidelity Press/ *Culture Wars* home office in South Bend, IN.

However, as it so often turns out, the delay has worked out to my advantage. It has given me time to reread and study Jones' uncharacteristically sloppy and disjointed missive; to exam the many public pro and con reviews of the book; and to conduct my own investigation of the tragedy. I trust my findings will help fill in many of the calculated as well as unintentional information gaps left by Jones in his rush to get his book to the Amazon

marketplace.

In addition to Gary Michael Voris and Eugene Michael Jones, this article highlights the role of four other key players in the controversial affair – Marc Brammer, Frank Coan, Father Paul E. Nicholson, and Terry Carroll as well as a sundry of incidental actors in *The Man Behind the Curtain*.

Finally, this article shines the spotlight on what can best be described as an unseen entity that binds this tragic tale together – that of the Prelature of Opus Dei.

### **A Rocky Introduction to RealCatholicTV.com**

For the record, while this writer has never subscribed to either RealCatholicTV.com (RCTV) or its successor, ChurchMilitantTV (CMTV) due to time limits and economics, over the years many subscribers have been kind enough to forward various segments to me for my comments. I generally try to oblige, as I certainly will try to do for readers of this column.

The fireworks between RCTV and this writer began on March 25, 2010, with a special edition of the network's flagship show, *The Vortex* in which Senior Executive Producer Michael Voris provided an accurate litany of the many woes besieging the post-conciliar Church, but an inaccurate solution to meeting the crisis. He gave a ringing endorsement to Opus Dei as the entity which will save the Church. He used the term "holy intransigence," a favorite expression of Father Josemaría Escrivá, founder of Opus Dei, and one rarely heard outside of Opus Dei circles. Yet Voris claimed he was not a member of Opus Dei and he got "nothing from anyone in any shape or form or manner to promote this group."

Four days later, on March 29, 2010, I circulated a strong rebuttal to Voris' promotion of Opus Dei by noting that the money-power cult is part of the problem, not part of the solution to the current crisis in the Church. I also challenged Voris to dedicate a segment of *The Vortex* to explaining why Opus Dei Bishop Rogelio Ricardo Livieres Plano of the Diocese of Ciudad del Este in Paraguay, who died in August 2015, was harboring the notorious clerical pederast, Father Carlos Urrutigoity, founder of the formally suppressed U.S.-based, Society of St. John. The e-mail gained international circulation.

Shortly after the e-mail reached RCTV, Simon Rafe, Senior Platform Administrator, issued a strong response stating: "Obviously, individuals like Randy can be safely ignored as they are heretics and schismatics in open rejection of the Church..." Since the poor chap did not know me from a hole in the wall, I presume some worm tongue had whispered sweet nothings in his ear.

To his credit, Rafe later apologized and retracted his charges, but added, "We do, however, stand by our support and endorsement of Opus Dei. We consider your identification of them as a "cult" to be rude, objectionable and slanderous towards a group recognized by and endorsed personally by the Holy Father." His reference to "we" indicated to me that Voris continued his public support of Opus Dei.

From Rafe's short e-mail and his lengthy full page e-mails to other Catholic critics of Opus Dei who had contacted RealCatholicTV.com, it was clear that Voris and Company stood four-square behind the Prelature.

For my part, I accepted Rafe's apology and the Opus Dei matter was closed.

### **Voris on Homosexuals as Victim Souls**

The next salvo came on September 24, 2010, when Voris featured a program on "Victim Souls" with the subheading, "Homosexual persons ARE different, but in one way many people might not have thought about very much."

I reviewed the program and wrote a critical evaluation of Voris' erroneous theories.

"The homosexual is indeed 'different,'" I wrote, "and that difference applies not only to his deviant choice of sexual objects, but to his heavily metastasized personality which is marked by neurotic, masochistic tendencies that are manifested in an array of phobias, obsessions and other sexual and emotional aberrations. ..." Looking back, this singular sentence contains as much information on the maldevelopment of the active homosexual as Jones' repetitive references to the traits attributed to Voris in *The Man Behind the Curtain*.

My five-page response also included a summary of the Roman Catholic Church's unofficial teaching on "victim souls," that is, those souls especially chosen by God to imitate Our Lord's Passion in a unique way, and who by their voluntary sufferings, trials and sacrifices make amends for sinners and their ingratitude in order that they, the sinners, can receive God's mercy.

This time no one from Voris' staff responded, but the bizarre reference to homosexuals as victim souls was never raised again.

The one thing I do recall quite clearly about this particular presentation was that it appeared to be almost autobiographical in nature. It was my first clue that Voris had had some homosexual experience in his past.

### **Voris Promotes and Defends Opus Dei**

On March 4, 2011, the issue of Opus Dei was reopened in connection with Marc Brammer, then (and still) the domain name owner, and one of the owners of the for-profit RCTV who contracted with Voris and his St. Michael's Media – a non-profit entity, and Concept Communication, LLC – a for-profit entity, to produce the internet video content for RCTV.

Some additional background on Brammer might prove helpful at this time.

Brammer graduated from the Mendoza College of Business at Notre Dame University in South Bend in 1974 with a BA in Economics and a Masters in Finance and Financial Management Services. From Human Resources Director for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, he went on to a very successful business career with Investment Trust, Inc. From 2000 to 2012 he served as Senior Director of Business Development for Moody's Analytics in Manhattan. He became a founder and CEO of iCARE Analytics LLC, and Business Development Director for Progeny Software LLC (merged with Ambry Genetics in 2015). Both firms are involved in the genetics aspect of health care. He is also currently the Chief Business Development Officer for Axon Advisors LLC, a medical research enterprise based in New York, founded and headed by his daughter, Emily Brammer.

In short, Marc Brammer is a very successful and wealthy entrepreneur and astute businessman.

Getting back to Voris, I sent him an e-mail asking him to confirm that Brammer is a member of Opus Dei and, as such, I asked if Brammer had any influence, direct or indirect, on the programs and policies of RCTV programming and Voris' public endorsement of the Prelature on his March 25, 2010, Vortex show.

Voris replied the very next day, March 5, 2011, and he was not, by any means, a happy camper. "... your constant invective and muckraking approach to our apostolate is loathsome, bordering on calumny," he said. He condemned the alleged "bee in my bonnet about Opus Dei," and suggested I stop by a confessional... to seek pardon for my "slander."

Personally, I was neither surprised nor offended by Voris' seemingly over-the-top reaction to a simple query

remembering the prayer of Saint Thomas More in the Tower of London in the year of Our Lord, 1534, that instructs us to love our enemies as they can never do one such good with their love and favor as they do with their malice and hatred.

In any case, Voris confirmed what I knew to be a fact, that Marc Brammer was a member of Opus Dei. But he assured me that Brammer had "ABSOLUTELY NO influence whatsoever on program policies."

Voris added that he came to know about Opus Dei from reading John L. Allen, Jr.'s book [\*Opus Dei: An Objective Look Behind the Myths and Reality of the Most Controversial Force in the Catholic Church\*](#), which is favorable to Opus Dei, and from talking to Opus Dei members including Brammer. He reminded me that the founder of Opus Dei, Josemaría Escrivá was a canonized saint. He offered no criticism of Opus Dei.

Before closing, Voris gave me his studio phone number, and thanked me for the good work I do for the Church. Like the Rafe confrontation, this incident was quickly forgotten.

### **Voris and Brammer – Good Cop/Bad Cop**

On the same day, March 5, 2011, this writer received a very cordial e-mail from Marc Brammer who stated that he was indeed "a supernumerary" of Opus Dei, lived in South Bend and worked for Moody's Analytics. He said he provided the seed capital [\$250,000.00] to launch RCTV in 2008 and "remain [sic] attached to the venture as a **personal hobby**." He insisted that neither Opus Dei or its members ever exercised any control over his business ventures. Then he added an unexpected comment:

For the record, I do have other media collaborations which I am equally excited about...one in particular with E. Michael Jones of Cultural Wars who lives here in South Bend and has been a friend for 30 years. I still remain a board member of his not-for-profit firm. He and I are planning a joint venture with the release of his book on Capitalism later this year which we intend to augment with radio program. It has the potential of being a game changer especially to try to articulate the need for the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in the U.S. to separate itself from the control and influence of political and governmental structures that have high jacked the interpretation of the fundamental truths entrusted to the Church. Jones and I have equal distaste for neo-cons across both the Democratic and Republican parties. Both have equally bad characters in them especially regarding anything pro-life.

I am interested in the success of both media adventures...with RCTV to highlight evil forces within and outside the Church... and with E. Michael Jones to highlight evil forces within the secular culture that can look to Church tradition for better guidance including just wages and just prices.

Brammer said he'd be happy to chat more about the "Capitalism" launch, but I never took him up on his offer. It wasn't until I read Jones' book that I recalled Brammer's 2011 e-mail concerning his long friendship with Jones, which the latter never bothered to mention in his book.

### **A Second Clash with Voris Over Opus Dei**

In the spring and summer of 2011, *The Vortex* targeted the National Office of the Knights of Columbus for its failure to publicly confront the political ranks of the Anti-Life Establishment within the Knights itself and its failure to dismiss the Knights who cast the deciding votes leading to the passage of the "gay marriage" law in New York in 2011.

None of this bad news was new news to me as the founder and National Director of the U.S. Coalition for Life (USCL), an international research agency specializing in exposing the U.S. Agency for International

Development (USAID) anti-life programs and policies.

On July 23, 2011, I sent Voris (cc Brammer) a short e-mail complimenting them on their exposé of the lack of Knights leadership in the battles for life, marriage and family. I also asked why, in his criticism of Carl A. Anderson, who took over the reign of Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant in 2000, did Voris fail to mention that Anderson was a member of Opus Dei.

I mentioned that I knew Carl very well in his early years as a young lawyer when the USCL collaborated with him on prolife legislation originating from the office of Senator Jesse Helms of NC. Anderson worked there as a Legislative Assistant from 1976 to 1981. "He was prolife back then, so what happened?" I asked.

Lastly, I mentioned I had lost track of Carl when he moved with Opus Dei Supernumerary Russell Shaw into the Knights' public relations/public policy office in Washington, D.C. in 1987.

Brammer replied on the same day. He said he knew that Shaw was a member of the Work, but he'd have to check with Murray Hill to find out about Anderson. As usual he was cordial.

Two days later, on July 23, 2011, Brammer informed me that the national office said Anderson is not Opus Dei. Later, he suggested I "park the OD stuff," because if I become so "consumed with OD stuff... you will have no energy to help us and then you become irrelevant just like our culture... Come on Randy... be a Catholic warrior with us... with me...with Jones...with Voris...we are not OD thugs!" Interesting, isn't it, how Brammer hangs himself together with Jones and Voris?

I asked Brammer to put his statement in writing on Opus Dei stationary, send me a copy, and then we'd talk. I believe that was our last communication.

It has happened in the past, that the Prelature has taken steps to reduce important numeraries or supernumeraries to the state of cooperators, who are not technically "members" of Opus Dei, to avoid them being openly identified as Opus Dei members. Is this the case with Carl Anderson? Perhaps Opus Dei will enlighten us.

In the meantime, let's examine a partial resume on Carl Anderson, today considered one of the most influential Catholics in the world, linking him to Opus Dei's vast network of apostolates and associations inside and outside the Vatican (Note: some of the Vatican offices have been reorganized):

- During the Reagan Administration, Anderson served in various positions of the Executive Office of the President as the liaison between Opus Dei, who was financing Poland's Solidarity Movement, Pope John Paul II and the White House.
- In 1987, Anderson joined Opus Dei supernumerary Russell Shaw in managing the Knights of Columbus policy office in Washington, D.C. in 1987.
- Anderson is member of the five-man Supervisory Council of the Vatican Bank (IOR).
- Anderson is a Visiting Professor of Family Law at the Rome session of the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family and founding Vice President and first Dean of the Institute in Washington, DC. (Russell Shaw also on staff).
- Anderson and his wife Dorian, are both members of the Pontifical Council for the Family

- Anderson is a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life and the Pontifical Council for the Laity
- Anderson is a consultant to the Pontifical Council for Communications
- Anderson is a consultant to the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace
- Anderson served as a lay auditor to the World Synods of Bishops in 2001,2005, 2008,2012
- Anderson is a *New York Times* best-selling author and promoter of Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body which is also promoted by Opus Dei
- On April 7, 2011, at Faneuil Hall in Boston, Anderson delivered the Boston Leadership Forum address on President John F. Kennedy titled "Making God's Work Our Own." The Forum is dedicated to the Second Vatican Council, John Paul II and Opus Dei founder Escrivá.
- Anderson has been awarded the Gold Palm of the [Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre](#) and made a Knight of St. Gregory the Great, and a Knight of the Grand Cross of St. Sylvester.

Indeed, Carl Anderson is the epitome of the *inscripti*, male members of Opus Dei chosen by God and the Prelature, the two being one and the same, for greatness and advancement.

As we move on to examine the relationship between Opus Dei, Brammer and Jones, perhaps the reader might ask himself how it is possible for Anderson to have achieved such a meteoric rise to the pinnacle of international fame, fortune and power in Vatican circles solely on his own merit without the assistance of a powerful backer like Opus Dei.

For the record, over the years, fences were mended with Voris and on September 20, 2013, I appeared on Church Militant to discuss my book *The Rite of Sodomy* and the homosexual colonization of the Catholic hierarchy, diocesan priesthood and religious orders. The interview remains on line. We have maintained contact since then and our relationship has remained friendly.

### **The Anatomy of the Opus Dei /Jones/Brammer Relationship**

Two of the questions which have been repeatedly asked by readers of *The Man Behind the Curtain* are, first, why did Jones write his book on Voris and secondly, what was the exact nature of Jones' relationship with the key players in the affair, specifically with Marc Brammer and Father Paul Nicholson, Voris' "tell-all" spiritual director. The following quote was taken from thehirschfiles.blogspot.com of October 8, 2016:

I wrote the book first of all to explain what really happened. Secondly, I wrote it to clarify the theological points that everyone was missing in the discussion. The dominant culture's downplaying of the true magnitude of this sin combined with Catholics ignoring the Church's teaching on penance and adopting the Protestant notion of cheap grace made his story incomprehensible.

I'd like to propose two other reasons why Jones decided to write the book and use Fidelity Press as the publishing vehicle.

First, because his friend and benefactor of more than thirty years, Opus Dei supernumerary Marc Brammer, asked him to and secondly, because E. Michael Jones's publishing enterprise is an Opus Dei apostolate/auxiliary society.

As an added incentive, perhaps Brammer offered Jones a deal he couldn't resist, possibly some kind of media

vehicle for Jones along the same lines of RealCatholicTV. After all, we know from Brammer's March 5, 2011, e-mail to me that general plans for such a joint media venture had been in the works at least six years prior to the Voris scandal. Also, in October 2011, Brammer appeared on a Catholic radio show out of San Diego and discussed his intention of hiring Jones for a role in his newly-formed corporation, the Institute for New Media.

Let's examine Jones' Ultramontane Associates, and then review again Brammer's March 5, 2011, unsolicited comments to me on his relationship with Jones, to see if we can shed some additional light on the subject.

### **Ultramontane Associates, Inc.**

Indiana Jones' non-profit entity, Ultramontane Associates, Inc, was incorporated on April 11, 1984. The Incorporator Designate and Registered Agent is South Bend Attorney Richard B. Urda Jr. In April 1985, the IRS recognized the entity as a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt, tax-deductible public charity organized to operate exclusively for charitable, educational, literary and religious purposes. Its National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) Classification is – Roman Catholic Religious Organizations (X22), 509(a) (2).

The Mission Statement of Ultramontane Associates is: "To disseminate educational commentary on family and social issues based on the moral law and Catholic social teaching. We distribute material in print and electronic form. We also occasionally conduct conferences, workshops, and speaking and travel tours for educational purposes."

Its principal office located at 206 Marquette Avenue, South Bend, IN, is also the Jones' residence.

The members of the **first** Board of Directors were E. Michael Jones (President and Editor of *Fidelity Magazine*/later *Culture Wars*) his wife, Ruth P. Jones (Secretary and Business Manager), and South Bend, Notre Dame alumnus, Attorney David Halpin, who died in March 2015.

Although the 1984 Articles of Incorporation provide for up to 15 directors, there has never been more than three principals (voting members) – Jones, his wife, and one other. When Halpin left, his place was taken by Opus Dei supernumerary, Marc Brammer, who is listed as the Vice President of Ultramontane Associates on both state and federal 1990 forms for 2011 through 2015 and for every year I have 990 returns, going back to at least 1993. Why didn't Jones mention that Brammer was vice-president of Jones' apostolate?

Under what IRS ruling did Ultramontane Associates qualify for "public charity" status?

(9) An organization that normally receives: (1) more than 33 1/3 % of its support from contributions, membership fees, and gross receipts from activities related to its exempt functions – subject to certain exceptions, and (2) no more than 33 1/3 % of its support from gross investment income and unrelated business taxable income (less section 511 tax) from businesses acquired by the organization after June 30, 1975.

This particular IRS reference caught my eye because every IRS Opus Dei member-owned corporation 990 return I have reviewed for this study cited the same section of the code.

Was that a coincidence? Read on.

The 2015 990-EZ Form indicates that the corporation took in \$69,335 in contributions and \$127,851 in program services plus a small amount in investment income for a total revenue of just over \$197,186.

For the period 2007 to 2015, Jones took in more than a million dollars in direct financial contributions. This does

**not** include money from his publishing business. How does a small-time publisher generate such a large amount of money? Who's the money power behind Jones' operation? And what "services" does Jones provide for his benefactors in return for their financial backing?

The 990 forms do not provide the names of Jones' big contributors who have made it possible for Jones to run his public charity and full-time publishing business out of his residence for these many years.

Expenses for 2015 totaled \$225,668. The deficit was \$28,036. The largest expense was the printing cost of *Fidelity Press/Culture Wars*; the second largest expense being salaries for Jones (\$52,000) and his wife, Ruth (\$36,000). VP Marc Brammer receives no compensation.

Interestingly, there is nothing in *Culture Wars* magazine to indicate Ultramontane Associates, Inc. is a public charity.

Further, as a public charity, Ultramontane Associates gave out **zero** grants and **zero** donations for every year I have 990 Forms up to 2015. It appears that Jones is his own charity. In this, he is simply following the admonition of Escrivá that "Our apostolate is the apostolate of 'non-giving.'"

The Founder believed that the traditional Corporal Works of Mercy is the primary task of religious orders and Opus Dei rejects that label, although Opus Dei does operate a handful of showcase projects such as primary schools, health and educational centers, technical and business schools, and women's domestic training centers – a primary source of maids and servants to care for Opus Dei residences and centers – which are scattered throughout large U.S. urban areas and around the world, mainly in Latin and South America.

Lastly, Form 990 Part VI Line 8b for 2011 and 2012 helps answer another important question in the Voris/Jones affair. It tells us who runs the show at Ultramontane Associates – "The governing body is small and therefore has no committees and makes all decisions together." Thus, we can be reasonably sure that the decision to print and publish *The Man Behind the Curtain* in 2016 was made "together" by Michael and Ruth Jones, **and** Marc Brammer.

### **Brammer's History as an Opus Dei Supernumerary**

Considering Brammer's known association with Opus Dei, it appears odd that Jones never mentions that fact in *The Man Behind the Curtain*. Instead, he has Christine Niles denying that there is an anti-Traditionalist hidden hand operating at CMTV. "There is no secret donor, no one bankrolling the apostolate, no rich Opus Dei member pulling the strings (the idea is laughable). ...Michael Voris calls his own shots, and makes his own decisions – based on the good of the Church and of souls."

Since there appears to be an obvious difference of opinion as to the role played by Opus Dei in the Jones/Voris affair, let's have a go at arguing in the affirmative using Brammer as the model for our study.

However, since a basic knowledge of Opus Dei is necessary to understanding the extraordinary nature and scope of Brammer's life-long commitment to the Prelature, I have included this short primer on Opus Dei for the reader.

### **Opus Dei as a World-wide Diocese**

"Opus Dei" translates into "Work of God." This is a loaded phrase which would take an eternity to unpack. I will simply say at this opening juncture that I do not believe this to be true, indeed I think just the opposite, and leave it at that.



However, members of Opus Dei do believe that God was the founder of Opus Dei and Escrivá was His messenger. They believe that to do the Work is to do God's Will. To criticize the Work is to criticize God. To abandon the Work is to abandon God and suffer eternal damnation.

The governing body of Opus Dei is hierarchical and male. Supreme power resides in the office of the Prelate/President-General, the "Father," who is chosen for life. The election of the Prelate must be approved by the pope. The Prelate's second in command is the Vicar General. A General Council made up of members of the Sacerdotal Society of the Holy Cross and a Central Advisory made up of Opus Dei female members, assist the Prelate in the pastoral government of the Prelature. However, one should not conclude from this description that women play any decision-making role in the governance of the Prelature – they do not.

Individual Opus Dei residences/study centers are administered by an Opus Dei Director who acts under the supervision of a Regional Commission. All governing entities are subject to the Opus Dei central government in Rome.

There are about 3,000 members of Opus Dei in the United States and 84,000 world-wide. These figures are reported from Opus Dei's public relations office. How accurate they are we do not know as membership in Opus Dei "admits no external manifestation" and the "number of members is kept hidden from outsiders."

Let's begin with **Opus Dei priests** and work our way down.

In its own words, "The Institute named Priestly Society of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei, abbreviated "Opus Dei," is an Institute for Christian perfection of the secular world consecrated to the acquisition and exercise of apostolates. The name Opus Dei refers to the entire Institute in which exists, however, a group of members whose name is the "Priestly [Sacerdotal] Society of the Holy Cross," which comprises the incardinated priests of the Institute and some laymen who, in the Father's judgment, are particularly disposed to becoming priests in future."

**Opus Dei priests** are hand-picked **only** from the Prelature's pool of its own lay male numeraries. They have already been carefully monitored for years at their Opus Dei residences before they are informed that God has called them to the priesthood. Rarely is the Opus Dei invitation refused.

The *Sedes Sapientiae* International Ecclesiastical College or Seminary was established in Rome on January 9, 1991, for the formation of Opus Dei candidates for Holy Orders. The seminarians study at Opus Dei's Pontifical University of the Holy Cross which is within walking distance from the seminary.

Opus Dei priests receive Holy Orders so that they may serve the Prelature and minister to the needs of its members and potential members. After ordination, they usually reside in an Opus Dei residence or facility, so in a sense, they remain close to the life they led as an Opus Dei lay numerary. Generally, Opus Dei priests continue to have lay numerary spiritual directors.

Many priests in Opus Dei have an advanced degree in canon law. Hence the quip – "The Dominicans gave the Church theologians; the Jesuits and Franciscans gave the Church missionaries; and Opus Dei has given the Church lawyers!" (My apologies to all my non-Opus Dei canon lawyer friends).

The Opus Dei Prelature is technically speaking a clerical structure. Opus Dei priests are incardinated into the Prelature, but laymen are associated by agreements. Even though it is through laymen that Opus Dei apostolates are financed and carried out; the power in Opus Dei, juridically speaking, resides in its priests.

And while Opus Dei is often identified as being "traditional," the priests incardinated in the Prelature and the priests of the Priestly Society say the Novus Ordo Mass. However, some priests, out of their own devotion, may

make use of the privilege of saying the traditional Latin Mass at times.

Please note that the infamous Canadian priest, Fr. Paul Nicholson, Voris' anonymous spiritual advisor in *The Man Behind the Curtain*, by some queer canonical machination, is not *really* an Opus Dei priest, he has never been incardinated as an Opus Dei Priest, nor is he a member of the "faithful of Opus Dei," but he is a member of the Sacerdotal Society of the Holy Cross, which is "intrinsically" connected to Opus Dei.

## **The Structure and Lay Apostolates of Opus Dei**

One does not "join" Opus Dei. One must be "invited."

Having achieved the minimum age of 18, one must petition the Prelature for membership; be vetted by Opus Dei Directors to insure the applicant has received "a divine calling" to the "vocation" of Opus Dei; and sign a written contract to carry out the Work – **for LIFE**. The rule regarding the age requirement, however, is often circumvented as Opus Dei uses the confessional, camps, Capstone programs, Father & Son Clubs and C.S. Lewis Narnia Clubs, and women's hospitality and domestic training service, to recruit young teens, and then tells them to keep their commitment to Opus Dei secret from parents and friends until they reach the age of consent or beyond.

Although Opus Dei states "we are constructed for the multitude," it recruits primarily from "the class which is called intellectual, either by the precept that they are outstanding or by reason of gifts they exercise, or by reason of dignity which is marked – is the guide for civil society." (sic)

Opus Dei is by studied design and statute, a secret society. While the Prelature publishes the names of all its priests and international and regional directors, lay members of Opus Dei are forbidden to reveal their membership in the Prelature unless they have the explicit approval of the Center Director. Marc Brammer is an exception to the rule. He is part of the "public face" of the Prelature and has been designated as such by the Director of the center to which he has been assigned. All members of his "cell" wear a "public face."

The ostensible purpose of secrecy, aka, "discretion," aka "prudent silence," concerning membership in Opus Dei is to permit its members to live a "hidden life in society" like Jesus did in Nazareth before He began His public ministry; to permit the Prelature to act efficiently; and to act as the leaven in the mass of human society. The real reasons are: to better infiltrate society and its institutions; to better acquire and exercise one's apostolate with minimum opposition; to permit recruitment of potential candidates without prejudice; and to fend off possible opposition from parents of potential members and other sources. Also, to be kept secret, are the internal working documents of the Prelature, its customs, spirit, ceremonies, and methods of apostolate, including methods of recruitment.

However, this demand for secrecy is no longer tenable since many of these heretofore secret documents governing the Prelature have been beautifully translated into the vernacular and are online at a new website titled "The Opus Dei Guidebook, " at <https://sites.google.com/a/realcatholiconline.org/the-opus-dei-guidebook/statutes-1>.

These documents include the publicly available 1983 Code of Canon Law references which defines the Prelature and its relationship with the laity and the bishops; *Ut Sit*, the November 28, 1982 Apostolic Constitution which erected Opus Dei as the first a Personal Prelature of the Catholic Church; the 1950 Constitutions which includes Opus Dei's governing documents with statutes that are still in force, but not found in the 1982 revised statutes; and the 1982 statutes which revised the 1950 Constitution but did **not** replace them.

I would also recommend a night or two of study at the Opus Dei Awareness Network (ODAN), <http://www.odan.org/>.

## Opus Dei Lay Membership

At the top of the Opus Dei lay register are the **numeraries**, male and female.

Unlike traditional religious orders where the candidate makes public vows, is recognized and accepted by the Church, and is cared for by the order for life, the numerary is contractually bound to the Prelature by a simple agreement or promise, but is also required to make private, personal vows of celibacy, poverty and obedience before two witnesses. As far as responsibility goes, the Prelature has no legal or canonical obligations toward the numerary. Thus, when a numerary, who has served Opus Dei for much of his adult life, decides to leave the Prelature, he leaves with next to nothing in terms of money, health insurance, references, etc.

When a numerary pledges his life to Opus Dei, he leaves his "natural" family behind in favor of his new "supernatural" family. Permission of the Director is needed for the numerary to contact a member of his own family. They must, at some point in their secular careers possess or acquire academic degrees with preference given to legal, business, medical, financial, teaching, and engineering degrees. However, should a conflict between one's career and the Opus Dei apostolate arise, the apostolate takes precedence. Their salaries are turned over to Opus Dei in return for a monthly stipend and well-tailored clothing, health coverage, etc. College students turn over their grants and monies from their parents to the Prelature. Where possible, numeraries try to donate as much of their salaries to Opus Dei's non-profit apostolates to obtain the maximum tax deductions. Once a month the numerary must turn over an exact receipt/expense sheet down to the last stamp purchased to the Director of the center.

Their mail, including newspapers and magazines, are vetted coming and going. Surveillance of and reporting on the activities of the numerary, in and out of the residence, is a notable feature of a numerary's existence. An Opus Dei physician tends to their physical ailments and an Opus Dei psychiatrist tends to their mental and emotional problems. They lead a tightly regimented spiritual life as laid out in the Plan of Life which includes regular daily, weekly, monthly and yearly religious duties as well as the self-infliction of corporal punishment. They need to be socially and personally attractive and free from any physical or cosmetic impediment. A Joseph (John) Merrick will never be found in their ranks.

As you can see, Opus Dei numeraries are not just a bunch of "ordinary Joes" as Opus Dei would have us believe.

Numeraries represent about 20% of the lay membership of Opus Dei we are told. Many hold important U.S. and international government positions as well as important posts at the Vatican.

Next in line are **oblates** or **associate members** who are also celibate, but generally live and work outside an official Opus Dei residence for personal, professional, or familial reasons. Like numeraries, they must devote their lives to the Work.

**Numerary assistants/auxiliaries** are young, unmarried women who act as maids and servants and do manual work for Opus Dei residences and conference centers. They are often foreign-born young women from Mexico or Spain who come from impoverished families, and are recruited and trained at a young age, some as young as fourteen. Lifelong celibacy is required of them. Their wages are low and money is taken out for their room and board at a female Opus Dei center. These young women are never to be left alone. When they leave an Opus Dei center, usually in groups of two, they must be accompanied by a female numerary.

Many of these girls and women are trained at the Lexington Center, Inc. in Chicago. The center states it also provides "educational seminars and classes and opportunities for spiritual growth."

**Supernumeraries**, like Marc Brammer, make up the largest Opus Dei grouping. They represent 70% of Opus Dei' formal membership and are the financial backbone of the Prelature. They may be single, or married, male or female. They hold secular jobs and earn a substantial income and often have generous-size families. These large families serve as a potential source of new recruits and income for the Prelature.

The supernumerary contributes a goodly portion of his income and time to the Work. It is said to be in the 10% plus range. He follows a regular prayer schedule and a Plan of Life which gives discipline and structure to his existence. He has a lay "spiritual director," who acts as his superior and with whom he meets usually once a week, and goes to confession to an Opus Dei priest only. He attends regular meetings, conferences, retreats and days of recollection hosted by Opus Dei and is always "fishing" for suitable Opus Dei members. Despite their intense involvement in Opus Dei, supernumeraries usually are not fully informed of the high echelon inner-workings of the Prelature.

Finally, we come to the category of **cooperators** of Opus Dei, who are not actually "members" of Opus Dei, but contribute money and engage in corporate apostolic activities to support and promote Opus Dei. Cooperators need not be Catholics. Indeed, they may be Protestants, Jews, Muslims, agnostics or atheists who are welcome to financially join the unofficial ranks of the Work. Known Freemasons and Communists are excluded.

Interestingly, a cooperator can also be someone who would be a supernumerary under normal circumstances, but whose "apostolate" would be compromised if full membership were discovered. Hence, the title of cooperator can be a useful "front" designation when needed.

Cooperators must be recommended by an Opus Dei member and be approved by the Prelature before being certified a "cooperator" of Opus Dei. However, only Catholic cooperators can obtain indulgences by fulfilling the conditions established by the Church and renewing, out of devotion, their desire to be Cooperators.

### **Brammer's Corporate Works**

The above description of supernumeraries like Marc Brammer, a father of eight children, reveals the large investment of time, money and energy the Prelature expects from family men, even one as busy as Brammer.

It does not fully explain, however, the extent and nature of other aspects of the Work including the Corporate works of Opus Dei, as opposed to the Corporal Works of Mercy which the Church requires of every Catholic. These corporate works are difficult both to explain and to understand, but bear with me.

A member of Opus Dei including a priest, associate priest, numerary, numerary assistant, or supernumerary can act individually or through the establishment of a corporate apostolate, to advance the Work in various fields of endeavor such as education, communications/media or economics. These entities are called "auxiliary societies." But even when the funding for the project is provided **solely** by the individual member(s) and even though such entities are not technically owned by the Prelature, they are subject to the authority of Prelature. Such an individual may become merely a "front man" or "shell" or "public face" for what is, in reality, an Opus Dei operation.

The following are apostolates/corporations set up by Brammer in his own name:

**Southold Center for Education, Inc.** is an Opus Dei female residence located near the University of Notre Dame at 1432 South Bend Avenue in South Bend.

The name, Southold may seem strange, unless one understands that Opus Dei, with rare exceptions, doesn't give their corporate initiatives an identifiable Catholic name. Even its \$47 million, 17 stories national office and conference center on Lexington Avenue in Manhattan with assets in the \$50 million range, is called Murry Hill

Place.

Southold is a Non-profit domestic corporation created on September 25, 1995. It enjoys a tax exempt, tax deductible status. Although Southold is maintained for and organized around Opus Dei programs and spirituality, the name of Opus Dei does not appear in the Articles of Incorporation. Rather the document sets forth as its vague purpose "To obtain money or property by gift, bequest or devise and to invest...the income and principal ... exclusively for educational, charitable, religious, scientific or literary purposes..."

The Articles of Incorporation list Marc Brammer and Christopher J. Godfrey, a local attorney as the incorporators. It has no members. Brammer is listed as president in a 1997 state report and treasurer of the corporation in a more recent 2016 state report.

Southold caters to women college undergraduates and professional women of all ages, and has summer camping programs for middle school girls.

It has an Oratory where Mass is said by an Opus Dei priest.

Southold's spiritual retreats for women are grounded in Opus Dei doctrine and spirituality, and are coordinated through the Shellbourne Conference Center, a beautiful Opus Dei retreat house for laymen and diocesan priests situated on forty acres of forested land in Valparaiso, IN. Its assets are listed as just under \$6 million, and its annual revenue at \$1.8 million. Its 990 tax return form does not indicate any connection to Opus Dei.

**Greenstar Enterprises, Inc.**, created and maintained by Brammer, was incorporated as a for-profit entity on May 28, 2008. RealCatholicTV is the DBA for Greenstar Enterprises. The assumed name was filed on October 17, 2008.

The Articles of Incorporation list Evon R. Vitale as the incorporator and Brammer and Vitale as the principals. Vitale's address, 112 W. Jefferson Blvd. Ste. 503, South Bend, IN is the same address as Greenstar Enterprises.

Voris, obviously never played a business role in RealCatholicTV. Jones makes that perfectly clear. Rather, Voris had a customer-vendor relationship with Brammer. However, Brammer did have an unnamed co-partner in the person of Frank Coan who appears for the first time in Chapter 6 of *The Man Behind the Curtain*. But Jones, as with so many characters in his book, never bothers to explain who Frank Coan is, and what his relationship is to Brammer. Let me do the honors.

On his LinkedIn page, Frank Coan identifies himself as the co-founder of RealCatholicTV, but does not mention Marc Brammer by name as his financial teammate and close friend.

Frank Coan is a partner at Coan & Ferguson, a managing consulting firm, and three other business enterprises all with the same address, 8374 Market Street, Lakewood Ranch, FL, in Manatee and Sarasota Counties. The address belongs to Coan.

He is, more significantly, a Managing Member of iCare Analytics LLC on North Federal Highway in Boynton Beach, FL, a company Brammer created in 2013. The Registered Agent for the firm is Brammer's son, Conrad Joseph Brammer, a Purdue University philosophy graduate and Chief Operating Officer for Progeny Genetics, LLC, a subsidiary of Ambry Genetics located in nearby Delray Beach, FL.

Coan was also a financial partner in two other media adventures promoted by Brammer **after** RealCatholicTV was replaced by Church Militant in June 2012 – the Institute for New Media and Greenstar Productions, LLC.

**Institute for New Media, Inc.** is a non-profit, public benefit corporation created by Brammer on February 17,

2012, in Indiana. This date is significant because it was the month that Father Nicholson, Voris' Opus Dei spiritual director said he discovered Voris was a homosexual and was HIV positive. More on this point later.

The Institute for New Media has three incorporators/ principals, Frank Coan, Marc Brammer (President), and his wife, Linda Brammer. The address on the document for Frank Coan is not Florida but the Brammer's residence.

Coan states that the Institute is an independent, non-partisan interdisciplinary research and development organization whose aim is to advance a general understanding of issues influencing our culture from a Catholic perspective through all forms of new media communications.

In October 2011, five months before the incorporation of the Institute, Brammer appeared on a San Diego Catholic radio show hosted by Dennis O'Donovan, in which he laid out his plans for his new media think tank. Although the Brammer interview is no longer available online, it is my understanding that among areas he hoped would be explored were Capitalism and usury – two of Jones' favorite themes. I believe he also announced he was interested in hiring Jones in connection with the Institute. Again, one wonders why Jones did not reveal any of this information in his book?

**Greenstar Productions** LLC, a Florida domestic company was created by Marc Brammer on July 15, 2013. Its principal address is the same Florida address for iCare Analytics in Boynton Beach. Its mailing address is Brammer's residence in South Bend. Listed as principals are Marc Brammer and, his wife Linda Brammer. Frank Coan is listed as the Registered Agent.

The Articles of Organization state the purpose for which it was organized is "ANY AND ALL LAWFUL BUSINESS," which doesn't tell you a whole lot does it? Except, perhaps, that Brammer's statement that RCTV was just a "personal hobby" turns out to be anything but a spontaneous singular financial fling.

We will return to the specific question as to whether or not RCTV is an Opus Dei operation, but for now let's leave Brammer and his multiple media apostates and check up on another key figure in the Jones story, Voris' unnamed "spiritual advisor" turned accuser and carrier of lurid tales, who we know today to be Father Paul Nicholson

### **Rev. Paul E. Nicholson – A Gross Betrayer of Trust**

For me, the most revolting of all the characters introduced in *The Man Behind the Curtain* is Father Paul E. Nicholson., followed by writer and editor Jones who granted the wayward priest full rein in revealing the most sordid and intimate details of Voris' homosexual life, details which by nature must have been made known to the priest during the Sacrament of Confession or during sessions of "spiritual direction" conducted by Nicholson. What kind of priest does this? We'll get back to this matter shortly.

Jones introduces the reader to the anonymous priest at the opening of Chapter 6. He states Voris met his "spiritual advisor" during the fall of 2010, although Nicholson was known to have been assisting Voris in scheduling his public appearances as early as 2009.

Once again, Jones fails to identify the spiritual advisor as an associate priest of Opus Dei and a member of the Sacerdotal Society of the Holy Cross as well as a diocesan priest of the Diocese of London, Ontario, Canada. Fr. Nicholson's Ordinary, Bishop Ronald P. Fabbro, permitted the priest to come to the States under the proviso that he refrained from any contact with Church Militant and Michael Voris. On July 1, 2013, Bishop Fabbro favored Nicholson with the office of "Missionary Preacher" as part of Pope Francis' call for a New Evangelization. Via various media outlets including CMTV, videoed daily homilies, parish missions, and Catholic conferences in the U.S. and international events including World Youth Day in Madrid, Fr. Nicholson was quickly acquiring a "public face," as Opus Dei would have it.

Much of what we do know about Fr. Nicholson's background doesn't come from Jones, but from the priest's short online autobiography. He was born in 1971 in rural Ontario, Canada; entered St. Peter's Seminary in 1989, and was ordained to the diocesan priesthood in 1997. The priest was assigned to two parishes, St. Joseph's which was canonically suppressed on July 9, 2006 and St. Mary of Perpetual Help which was likewise suppressed on June 24, 2007.

Nicholson's first introduction to Opus Dei was *The Way*, Escrivá's spiritual handbook for laymen. When Opus Dei established the Ullerston Center (now defunct) in Toronto in 1982, he joined as an associate priest meaning he was both a diocesan priest and a member of the Sacerdotal Society of the Holy Cross. But if he had to choose between them, it's clear that he is as committed to the Work as supernumerary Brammer is.

"I am convinced that Opus Dei represents a clear picture of official Catholicism," says Nicholson. "... Opus Dei stands fully, entirely and completely with the Pope," he explains, "and has brought such joy and meaning to my priesthood, that I can literally say; 'a day within your courts are better than a thousand elsewhere.'"

Fr. Nicholson's devotion to Opus Dei, first and foremost, is important because it explains, in part, why the priest would naturally line up with Marc Brammer against Voris.

### **A Word About True Catholic Spiritual Direction**

Returning to Fr. Nicholson's very wicked exposé of Voris' early homosexual life, it's impossible to understand his actions as Voris' anonymous "spiritual advisor" in *The Man Behind the Curtain*, unless we grasp the heterodox nature and purpose of spiritual direction in Opus Dei, from the perspective of their confessors and lay spiritual directors and directresses.

Almost all Catholics who have received the Sacrament of Penance from a good confessor will have experienced spiritual direction in its most basic form as spiritual advice given prior to the imposition of a penance and absolution by the priest in the confessional.

The Seal of Confession is often referred to in the Church as part of the *internal* forum. This in contrast to the *external forum* which consists of an individual's outward observable actions and behaviors, that is, public knowledge.

Although, technically speaking, private spiritual direction outside the confessional is not covered by the seal, most priests will regard it as part of the *internal* forum and act accordingly. To eliminate any possible confusion as to the exact nature of the conversation, a priest at the end of a counseling session may ask the individual if he wishes to make a confession, at which time the matters previously discussed would be briefly repeated and thus come under the seal.

Not a few Catholics also have the great grace of having a pious and competent priest as a personal spiritual director – a priest in whom they can voluntarily confide, who understands the innermost workings of the soul God has put in his care, and who wills nothing but its sanctification.

On the subject of spiritual direction, the reader may want to recall the December 17, 1890, decree of Pope Leo XIII, *Quemadmodum*, in which the Holy Father absolutely forbade the practice of the mandatory manifestation of conscience by superiors of religious orders including lay male and female members, and those who have taken either simple or solemn vows

### **Opus Dei's Abuse of Spiritual Direction**

In the case of Opus Dei's praxes related to the spiritual direction of potential candidates and new members to the Prelature, the lines of demarcation between the *internal* and *external* forum are blurred so as to permit intimate matters revealed in supposedly confidential "fraternal chats" to be shared up the ladder of the Opus Dei chain of command as needed.

Opus Dei can work around Pope Leo XIII's prohibition against the mandatory manifestation of conscience by claiming the Prelature is not, technically speaking, "a religious order."

Let's see how this works in practice.

We know that all potential candidates for membership in Opus Dei are carefully investigated and are the object of a careful grooming and vetting process which includes going to confession, face to face, to an Opus Dei priest at an Opus Dei center. The Opus Dei priest may be provided with a list of the names of the penitents in the order in which they come to confession.

Over time, a candidate is encouraged to reveal more and more personal information to his confessor, until he becomes accustomed to revealing to the priest intimate spiritual details including a manifestation of conscience which reveals the state of his soul, as well as information on the potential recruit's family, educational aspirations, talents, financial resources, and the nature of any future apostolate to advance the Work.

The Church has always taught that the Sacramental Seal of Confession is inviolable. Therefore, it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray in any way a penitent in words or in any manner and for any reason (Canon 983 – §1). The confessor is also prohibited completely from using knowledge acquired from confession to the detriment of the penitent even where any danger of revelation is excluded (Canon 984 – §1). Further, a person who has been placed in authority cannot use in any manner for external governance the knowledge about sins which he has received in confession at any time (Canon 984 – §2).

Thus, the opinion of a spiritual director or confessor of a seminarian may never be sought when it is a question of admission to Holy Orders or dismissal from seminaries. Neither can spiritual directors and seminary rectors hear the sacramental confessions of their students residing in the same house unless the students freely request it in a particular case.

These prohibitions, however, do not appear to be binding on Opus Dei confessors who regularly hear the confessions of members living in the same residence or of confessors who are called upon to give an opinion as to the admissibility of a potential numerary or supernumerary to the ranks of the Prelature.

### **Lay Spiritual Direction in Opus Dei**

Following a set probationary period, after which the candidate is accepted by the Father in Rome, he or she enters fully into the life of the Prelature. He is now advised that in addition to an Opus Dei confessor, he has been assigned a lay spiritual director by the Director of the Center. The new member is given no choice in the selection. New members are told that their lay directors have been given "special graces from God," and must be obeyed at all time. Non-compliance is promptly punished.

The "confidence," now known as the "fraternal chat," covers the same areas covered by the weekly confession, but more so. New members are either told or left to conclude that the "fraternal chat," is covered by the same Seal of Confession binding on the priest in the confessional, even though this is not true. Sometimes, the lay director will tell the new member that he is assisted in his task as a spiritual director by local and regional Councils. But this rarely is understood by the new member to mean that anything he tells his director that is deemed "necessary" to the interests or welfare of the Work will be shared up the Opus Dei chain of command.



By the time the new member realizes that his spiritual welfare runs a far second to the advancement of the Work or that his conscience is being manipulated and deformed under the guise of "spiritual direction," it's very late in the day.

Rev. C. John McCloskey, who wears the "public face" of an Opus Dei priest, was former director of the Catholic Information Center in Washington, D.C. He has an online article titled "A Spiritual Consultant" in which he promotes the idea that every adult Catholic should have a priest or lay spiritual director to whom he can entrust "the salvation and sanctification of his very immortal soul," as if spiritual direction is some kind of a cookie-cutter enterprise. However, he fails to make it clear that it is only in a Sacramental Confession that the Seal of Confession" applies.

Clearly, we see in Fr. Paul Nicholson's exposure of the secret sins of Michael Voris, a reflection of Opus Dei's corrupt practices in the realm of lay spiritual direction.

Regarding Fr. Paul Nicholson, a representative of the London Diocese of Ontario was kind enough to respond to my query as to the status of Fr. Nicholson. I was told he has "stepped away from his ministry for a time." An Opus Dei media representative has also informed this writer that to the best of his knowledge, Fr. Nicholson's associate status with the Prelature has not changed.

### **Some Incidental Notes on van den Aardweg and Anatrella**

In *The Man Behind the Curtin*, the writings of Dr. Gerard J.M. van der Aardweg and, to a lesser degree, the writings and opinions of Msgr. Tony Anatrella, on the neurotic and narcissistic personality of homosexuals, are used by Jones to deliver a heap of burning coals on Michael Voris' head.

The name, Dr. Gerard van den Aardweg, appears for the first time in Chapter 2. His name is dropped out of the blue by Jones without so much as a short biographical sketch to introduce the Dutch psychologist and his Opus Dei credentials to the reader.

I had no difficulty in recognizing the name, however, because I was well acquainted with *The Battle for Normality: A Guide for (Self-)Therapy for Homosexuality* (1997) and used several of van den Aardweg's excellent insights on developmental factors which influence homosexual behaviors in my own book, *The Rite of Sodomy* (2006). Over the years, he and I have engaged in an occasional trans-Atlantic correspondence on many subjects including Opus Dei, of which, by his own admission, he is a long-time member, presumably a supernumerary, since he is married with children.

In reading the many lengthy excerpts that Jones took from van der Aardweg's text, it is often difficult to tell where the text ends and where Jones' opinions begin, although the last time I checked Jones didn't have a degree in either psychology or psychiatry. Indeed, if one is not careful, it's easy to trick one's mind into thinking it is van der Aardweg who is psychoanalyzing Voris on the pages of *The Men Behind the Curtain*, and not Jones.

I thought it a tad strange that Jones would choose van der Aardweg, who lives in the Netherlands, as his main source of information on the psychological aspects of homosexuality rather than an American expert in the field like Dr. Joseph Nicolosi or Dr. Jeffrey Satinover. Did the fact van der Aardweg is a member of Opus Dei influence Jones' decision? I don't know. Perhaps Jones will tell us when this report is published.

Even stranger is Jones' mention of Monsignor Tony Anatrella, a French priest and Prelate of His Holiness honorary, a psychoanalyst and specialist in Social Psychiatry and a consultant to the Pontifical Council for the Family (now under the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life) and for the Commission for Health Care Workers (now under the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development). The Pontifical Council for the Family was created by Pope John Paul II in 1981 with funding from the Knights of Columbus and Opus Dei.

Known for his "expertise" in the fields of marriage, family, and human sexuality. Msgr. Anatrella assisted in the writing of the Vatican's 2005 instruction, "Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations With Regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies," as mentioned by Jones.

That same year, *Romana*, a publication of the Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei ran a favorable story on Msgr. Anatrella's, presentation on priestly vocations at the parish of Saint Pierre du Gros Caillou in Paris on February 1, 2005. He lectured some 50 priests on the need to always dress and conduct themselves appropriately.

In 2011, the Vatican published a copy of one of the monsignor's talks on homosexuality which stressed similar themes of narcissism, emotional immaturity and deviant homosexual behaviors voiced by Jones in his book.

In 2014, he was appointed as a consultant to the Extraordinary Synod on the Family that set the agenda for the full Synod on the Family held in 2015.

Rumors alleging that Anatrella was sexually abusing seminarians sent to him from monasteries and seminaries from all over France for anti-homosexual "therapy" had surfaced as far back as 2001. We know that news of the alleged accusations reached the ears of the Archbishop of Paris, Jean-Marie Lustiger (1981-2005), but church officials took no action on the reports until years later.

On October 30, 2006, an ex-seminarian, Daniel Lamarea, filed a French civil suit charging that, in 1987, at age 23, he began having sexual relations with Anatrella as part of the priest's "sex therapy" program. Two other charges surfaced that year but no action was taken by civil authorities since the incidents involved young adults not children and involved Anatrella's word against the ex-seminarians. Similarly, Cardinal [André Vingt-Trois](#), who succeeded Lustiger in 2005, said he took no action when he learned about the charges against Anatrella, who he was known to support.

In May 2016, months before *The Man Behind the Curtain* hit the fan, another ex-seminarian accused Anatrella of sexually abusing him from 1997 to 2011 at the priest's Paris office. Cardinal Vingt-Trois publicly admitted that in 2014 he received a written complaint from a priest who stated that he was sexually exploited by Anatrella, but took no action because the complainant would not reveal his identity publicly.

To date, at least four former seminarians have stated that Anatrella performed homosexual acts on them including mutual masturbation and sodomy, but only Lamarea has agreed to be identified by his real name. Anatrella has vigorously denied the charges.

A recent staff *CRUX* report dated February 20, 2017, indicated that originally the Anatrella case was to be heard by a commission on clerical sexual abuse created by Cardinal Vingt-Trois and headed by Paris Auxiliary Bishop Éric Marie de Moulins d'Amieu de Beaufort. However, because Anatrella had been a consultant for the Church tribunal in Paris on other abuse cases, the trial has been transferred to an inter-diocesan panel based in Toulouse. A decision to laicize the priest would then be referred to the Vatican's Congregation for the Faith. Any lesser punishment would be delivered by the panel in Toulouse.

CRUX also reported that a scheduled talk on "sex education" by Anatrella to a conference sponsored by the Opus Dei-funded Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at the Lateran University in Rome to be held in early February 2017 was cancelled at the last minute.

With a little more time and research, indeed, if Jones did any research at all for *The Man Behind the Curtain*, instead of regurgitating information that was spoon fed to him by his Opus Dei associates, my guess is that he would have avoided all references to Anatrella in his book.

## Terry Carroll's Role in the Voris Debacle

Jones, who gives Terry Carroll no less than 43 hits in *The Man Behind the Curtain*, makes his entrance onto the Voris scene early in Chapter 1.

According to Jones, the rich Texan, like Nicholson, "just showed up out of nowhere" (how does that happen?) ... contributed some money (\$300,000) and ended up running RealCatholicTV, and then Church Militant's on-line forum which included a blacklist of banned critics.

Jones added a comment from a blogger who said Carroll belonged to the Mater Dei Parish run by the Fraternity of Saint Peter in Irving, Texas, but not much else, which appears par for the course. Let see what we can do to remedy the situation.

On March 14, 2014, Mundabor posted a lengthy text sent to him by Terry Carroll of Church Militant TV. The blog was titled "'Vorisgate' – : A Message From CMTV." It tells us a great deal about Carroll.

Carroll opens with some information on Brammer, identified as a member of Ops Dei, and others who helped launch RealCatholicTV. He goes on to explain:

Neither Marc Brammer, nor Opus Dei, nor anyone else "funded" then RCTV through that time, and no one else did, either. All relationships with Marc Brammer were ended when the name change occurred in June 2012. **Parting of the ways was completely amicable and, was, in part, motivated by a desire to eliminate all the baseless speculation about "outside influences" such as Opus Dei, of which Michael Voris is not and never has been a member (bold added).**"

Carroll went on to defend CMTV's commitment not to engage in public criticism of the pope based on the premise that such criticism leads to people being led out of the Church. After taking a swipe at those who are critical of CMTV's position, Carroll closed with a statement that CMTV prefers to "speak the Truth clearly" and "not contribute to potential loss of faith in the Church."

Mundabor's response to Carroll's text is short and to the point. He takes notice of Carroll's statement that there is no financial connection between Opus Dei and that Voris was never a member of Opus Dei, and that Brammer and Voris parted ways in 2012 when CMTV was created.

Whoa! Whoa! Time Out! If what Carroll said is true, that Brammer and Voris split in 2012 on good terms, by what power or authority did Brammer come back to bite Voris' rear end in 2016? Who died and left Brammer king of the hill at Church Militant? This is the \$64,000 question that Jones never answers.

## Time for a Closer Look at Terry Carroll

The first time I learned of Mr. Carroll's existence at RealCatholicTV was in late March 2010 after the USCL had issued the press release "Warning – Michael Voris Promotion of Opus Dei is Dangerous to Your Faith," which resulted in many e-mails being sent to the Ferndale, MI, studio questioning Voris' decision to promote the Prelature. After reaffirming that the founder of Opus Dei is a canonized saint and the organization is a personal prelature of the pope himself, Voris passes the baton to Carroll to settle the matter in his own fashion.

The gist of Carroll's standard response goes something like this – To criticize Opus Dei is to criticize the Church and the Holy Father. Opus Dei is not a cult. The vocation of Opus Dei members is to "seed the temporal order with Gospel values." The vocation of Opus Dei members "is compromised if they draw attention to themselves,"

but it is not hard not to do this since "they stand out from the rest of us." Carroll recommends John Allen's book on Opus Dei which he says is endorsed by the Prelature as fair and accurate.

There is a male Opus Dei center in Irving, TX, the town where Terry Carroll resides, called the Wingren Study Center. It is supported by the Wingren Foundation based in Houston, TX, where Opus Dei maintains the Chaucer Drive Study Center near Rice University and the Holy Cross Chapel directed by an Opus Dei priest, the Southgate Center for women, and the Featherock Retreat Center. When reviewing these centers, I noted that there is an active campaign in Texas to recruit Opus Dei cooperators.

My guess is that with an Opus Dei center in Irving, Carroll, who knows a great deal about the workings of Opus Dei, and highly approves of the Prelature, has had some contact with the Prelature over the years. This would be in addition to his obvious contact with supernumerary Marc Brammer, and Opus Dei-connected E. Michael Jones, both of whom Carroll knows fairly well.

### **Carroll Condemns the SSPX and Traditionalist Leaders**

Jones reports that as early as April 25, 2010, Terry told supernumerary Brammer that he believed that schism was as bad as abortion and that the SSPX was in schism. Carroll mentions Michael Davies in his e-mail, which triggers Jones long diatribe on his alleged victorious debate against Davies on the issue of schism.

Throughout the fall of October 2014 and beyond, Carroll continued his attacks against the Traditionalist Movement. In response to a suggestion from a viewer that Church Militant stop bashing other Catholics and help promote unity in the Church, Carroll launched a salvo of attacks against *The Remnant* and *Catholic Family News* for publicly criticizing the pope in almost every issue, thus contributing to the exit of the laity from the Church. He goes on to criticize members of the Society of St. Pius X as "Halloween Catholics," and takes a pot shot at the Sedevacantists, as well.

Carroll states that Church Militant is an equal opportunity critic and subjects all religious groups that are in error to scrutiny – except for Opus Dei, of course.

### **Voris Joins Carroll in Attacking Traditionalists**

In September 2015, Voris began special series on The Vortex on the SSPX in which he repeated Carroll's charge that "every single SSPX priest and bishop is committing a mortal sin when he offers Mass." Voris also claimed that Catholics who attend SSPX chapels risk eternal damnation.

Among the Traditionalists he attacked were John Vennari (*CFN*), Michael Matt (*The Remnant*) and Louie Verrecchio (*aka Catholic*). This writer is proud to have written articles for all these honorable Catholic men over the last thirty years.

Having read the transcripts of the entire series in a single day, there are some repetitive themes in Voris' lectures that stick in my mind. One is Voris' repeated emphasis on the virtue of blind obedience. "There are many paths to Hell and only one to heaven," says Voris, "and that is "obedience, absolute and total obedience."

As written, this statement is not true.

The highest virtues, as taught by Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are Faith, Hope and Charity, and the greatest of these is Charity. That man owes absolute obedience to Almighty God and His Commandments is not in question here. But as a general principle of righteous conduct, obedience has its limitations both in the lay and religious life. Superiors of religious orders, for example, cannot claim obedience in contravention to the dispositions of higher authority. Much less, in the limbo world of Opus Dei, can a lay numerary claim absolute

obedience from a member or potential member of the Prelature who has been assigned to him for spiritual direction.

At this point in my commentary on Church Militant versus the Traditionalist Movement, I'd like to leave Carroll and Voris for a moment and switch the spotlight back to Jones and **his** views on schism, the SSPX and criticism of the pope and bishops. Since Jones made the decision to devote so much time and space in *The Man Behind the Curtain* to these issues, even though they weren't particularly pertinent to the Voris scandal, I believe they are fair game for criticism.

### **E. Michael Jones and Lyman Stebbins**

At the start of Chapter Two, Jones states that shortly after he separated from *The Wanderer*, which must have been in or around the mid-1960s, he met with Lyman Stebbins, founder of Catholics United for the Faith (CUF), who had also split from Al Matt's newspaper over the issue of criticizing bishops.

Jones admits that everything he knows about the Church's position on criticizing the bishops and the pope came from Stebbins.

H. Lyman Stebbins, (1911-1988), H stands for Hart, had a very colorful background as a young man, but a Theology Degree is not on his résumé. Neither is there any CUF reference to his membership at Yale University in the notorious senior secret society Skull and Bones (Class of 1933).

Stebbins came from an extremely wealthy Episcopalian Wall Street family associated with the firm of DeCoppet and Doremus, and he himself had a successful career on the New York Stock Exchange. Following a long illness, he went in search of God. He first tried life as a Benedictine oblate. He founded Mount Savior Monastery in Elmira, N.Y., but eventually left. The monastery is still in existence.

His next attempt brought Stebbins and his money to another secret society – Opus Dei.

In 1968, the now Catholic Stebbins used part of his fortune to start Catholics United for the Faith (CUF) as "an international lay apostolate" founded to "support, defend, and advance the efforts of the Teaching Church in accords with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, specifically, *Lumen Gentium* which states: "... [The Laity] are called by God ...being led by the spirit of the gospel, so that they can work for the sanctification of world from within, in the manner of leaven (No. 31)."

As with almost all Opus Dei lay apostolates including Jones' Ultramontane Associates, CUF is a public charity" that (9) "... normally receives: (1) more than 33 1/3 % of its support from contributions, membership fees, and gross receipts from activities related to its exempt functions – subject to certain exceptions, and (2) no more than 33 1/3 % of its support from gross investment income and unrelated business taxable income..."

In a 1974 address titled, "The Essential Meaning and Purpose of Catholics United for the Faith," delivered to the Memphis Chapter of CUF," Stebbins stated that the laity "have never had what we undoubtedly need: a formation and a form for our spiritual life." In his call for "a spiritual Renaissance," Stebbins said that the laity need a "Rule of Life," (you mean like an Opus Dei "Plan of Life?"), and the development of "a regular, unified, country-wide series of retreats and days of recollection" (you mean the kind that Opus Dei sponsors at its centers?). Finally, he suggests that "young Catholic who are serious about answering the call to holiness as lay people, and that they might be given a chance to spend a year or two after high school – or after college – at a small center for Catholic lay formation... (you mean become an Opus Dei numerary and live in an Opus Dei residence?). Notice how Stebbins got the Opus Dei message across without ever mentioning the Prelature?

So, it is not surprising that Jones' and Stebbins' and CUF's position on the criticism of bishops and the pope

mirrors that of Opus Dei: that is, public criticism of bishops and the pope is prohibited.

The first CUF office on North Ave. and Opus Dei's Regional Office were both located in New Rochelle, N.Y. After Stebbins' death in 1989, CUF was moved to Steubenville, Ohio, home of the Franciscan University. Its magazine is *Lay Witness* and its publishing arm is Emmaus Road Publications. A number of prominent Opus Dei leaders are represented on its advisory councils including Dr. Scott Hahn, Russell Shaw, Archbishop John J. Myers and Bishop Robert W. Finn.

According to the CUF website, the organization "is operated by dedicated lay volunteers, **limited paid staff** and a loyal Board of Directors" with David Rodriguez, President, Mike Sullivan, a member of the Board of Directors and former President, and Shannon Minch-Hughes, Chief of Operations among others.

As reported in its 990 IRS report for 2012, Mike Sullivan, then President, received almost \$100,000 in salary and other compensation and Shannon Minch-Hughes received more than \$76,000 as Vice President. Contributions between 2008 and 2012 totaled over \$2 million.

In 2013, Sullivan received a salary of over \$69,000 and Minch-Hughes received \$79,000. Contributions were listed as over \$274,000.

In 2014, Minch-Hughes received over \$57,000 as salary for Vice-President, but no salary for President was listed. Contributions were over \$ 250,000.

Isn't Opus Dei Holy Poverty wonderful?

### **Is Voris Connected to Opus Dei?**

Thus far, we've connected the Prelature of Opus Dei to three of the key players in *The Man Behind the Curtain* – Jones, Brammer, Nicholson, and possibly Carroll. Now it's time to shine the spotlight on Michael Voris.

Here are two key questions yet to be answered in this article – What, if any, are Voris' connections to Opus Dei? And more specifically, is Voris' St. Michael's Media an Opus Dei Apostolate?

For, when all is said and done, if the answers to the above questions can be answered in the affirmative, then the reader will know just about everything there is to know about Opus Dei and Michael Voris and E. Michael Jones and the rest of their associates named in *The Man Behind the Curtain* and "All the Men Behind the Opus Dei Curtain."

### **Where Voris Met Brammer – Windmoor Center**

Frequently, it's what a writer leaves out of a book that proves to be more significant than what he includes. Take Jones' reference to the Windmoor Center which is found in Chapter 6, for example.

Obviously, the location has a special relevance to the story because it is where Brammer's misadventure with Voris is said to have begun.

Jones states the two men met for the first time in May 2008. Brammer had organized a "Father/Son" gathering at Windmoor Center and Voris, President of St. Michael's Media (SMM), was invited to give a lecture on the role of Catholic media in the age of the internet. During their conversations Voris told Brammer of his current financial woes and his difficulties with the Detroit Diocese and his dream of building a Catholic television network. They discussed an internet TV station venture, and shortly thereafter Brammer offered to provide Voris with a quarter of a million dollars in startup funds. The contract was signed on August 28, 2008.

Now I wonder how many readers were curious enough to look up what and where the Windmoor Center is? If you did, you would have found out that the Windmoor Study Center is the Opus Dei male residence and study and meditation facility for Notre Dame undergraduate students and Opus Dei staff and priests. Why didn't Jones mention this? Why did Jones fail to mention that Voris' 2008 lecture on Catholic media was given at an Opus Dei facility?

### **Studies in Opus Dei Corporate Works as Apostolates**

In any case, the fact that Jones didn't identify Windmoor an Opus Dei entity is fortuitous for me since it gives me the opportunity to use Windmoor as a primer on Opus Dei corporate investment strategies, and why it is so difficult, almost impossible, to identify and track Opus Dei – controlled programs, projects, and "apostolates."

The Windmoor Study Center, a 501 (c) (3) corporation, was established in 1960. The mansion was famous for its magnificent chapel designed by the famous award winning architect, Duncan Stroik. The center functions both as a residence, recruitment center and meeting and lecture hall for Notre Dame male students and others. Last spring, the old mansion was raised to the ground to make room for a new \$5.3 million building.

**The Windmoor Foundation, Inc.** is another Opus Dei non-profit public benefit charity created on April 29, 2003. The Articles of Incorporation do not indicate Opus Dei ownership, which, of course, is one of the many benefits of incorporation. Its function is to raise money and disburse payments for salaries, conferences, to build a new center. Its assets are listed at \$308,325.

The incorporator of the Foundation is singular, Jose A. Bufill, a former Opus Dei resident of Windmoor and a native of Havana, Cuba, who earned his medical degree from Opus Dei's University of Navarre in Pamplona, Spain. Michael J. Seelinger, the Opus Dei Director of Windmoor is President of the Foundation. Gregory G. Giebler, another Opus Dei member, is Vice President.

**The Association for Educational Development (AED)**, a Chicago, foreign-based holding company (outside of Illinois), is the Opus Dei parent owner of the Windmoor Center. Holding companies have the advantage of shielding the name of the real owners from public scrutiny and shielding them from legal liability.

AED does nothing of itself. It merely holds assets in the form of investments, stocks and bonds, real estate, even whole companies, for Opus Dei

The original Articles of Incorporation for AED were filed on October 28, 1965. Nine directors were listed, all males. The stated purpose of the AED was: To promote general education, that is, the intellectual, moral and cultural development of all persons regardless of race, color, creed, nationality or financial resources; to establish and operate conference centers, cultural centers, youth clubs, student residences; ... to assist by grants, scholarships, loans ... etc. No mention of Opus Dei's affiliation with AED was noted at the time of incorporation.

However, in 1974, the incorporation purpose was amended to identify the AED as a corporate entity of Opus Dei: For religious, educational and charitable purposes. In cooperation with and in order to further the religious, educational and charitable purposes of the Roman Catholic organization, Opus Dei (Work of God), etc.

The Treasurer and Secretary for the AED is Gregory Giebler mentioned above in connection with the Windmoor Foundation

At one time, there were ten other Opus Dei corporate family members sharing the AED's Keating Avenue address. Some have moved to new locations. Keep in mind that all these Opus Dei apostolates are tax

deductible and tax exempt entities. Also, remember that Opus Dei numeraries who control the assets and direction of these corporations and foundations serve at the pleasure of the General Council of the Prelature.

- **Midwest Theological Forum, Inc.** – The MTF is an Opus Dei not-for-profit corporation that publishes, translates and distributes Catholic religious materials and promotes Fr. Josemaría Escrivá's writings and memorabilia. It organizes courses for Catholic bishops, priests and laity. It is headquartered in Downers Grove, IL. Edmundo Martinez is the General Manager and Rev. James Socias is the Vice-President. Fr. Socias is also the President of the St. Josemaría Institute founded in 2006 and housed within the MTF structure. The Opus Dei priest was born in Barcelona, Spain, and received his Doctorate in Naval Engineering from the University of Madrid, and, after ordination received his Doctorate in Canon Law from the University of Navarre. Greg Giebler of the AED and Windmoor Foundation is also Treasurer of the MTR. Net assets of the MTF as of 2015 was \$7.5 million.
- **The Association for Educational Development, Indiana.** – An Indiana branch of the AED using the Windmoor address was formed in 1979 to facilitate financial transactions with the parent group in Chicago. Listed as President/Director is John M. Wildes, Executive Director of the Chicago-based AED.
- **Castlewood Foundation** – It promotes the spirit of Opus Dei. It sponsors spiritual retreats and theology classes and offers support for Opus Dei priests and laymen who are engaged in the Work and in providing spiritual counseling to interested persons. Its total financial support for 2009-2013 is \$1.7 million. The President of the Foundation is John M. Wildes, who also serves as the Executive Director of the AED and is a Board member of the Woodlawn Foundation (see below). Charles Cushnie is also associated with the AED, and the Woodlawn Foundation (see below). Recently, most of the Foundation's activities have been shifted to the Opus Dei Sauganash Study Center on North Cicero Avenue in Chicago, IL which attracts urban middle and high school and college male students and professional men; and the new spectacular Darien Center in Darien, IL, which attracts boys and men of all ages with its courses on robotics, its Lego League, its Father-son Club and other programs which are open to all regardless of race, creed and background.
- **Euclid Foundation, Inc.** – With \$941,000 in assets, the foundation is connected to the Opus Dei male residence and religious, and educational center at the above Darien Center. The Director, Charles D. Cushnie, is also connected to the Castlewood Foundation, the AED, and the Woodlawn Foundation.
- **Lincoln Green Foundation** – With \$644,000 in assets, the Foundation serves as an Opus Dei male residence and religious and educational center near the University of Illinois in Urbana, IL. Gregory G. Giebler is a Director. He is also connected to the Windmoor Foundation and the MTF.
- **Midtown Cultural Center, Inc.** – Located in Chicago, this Opus Dei Corporation makes grants in support of various cultural and religious and youth activities as well as support for Opus Dei residents who staff the programs. It also supports the Lexington Center, Inc. in Chicago where young women, many from abroad, are trained and gain work experience in cleaning and caring for Opus Dei centers.
- **Scepter Publishers, Inc.** is one of Opus Dei's major publishing houses. It is located in Strongsville, Ohio and has assets of \$ 4.5 million.
- **Wynncliff, Inc.** – The vice-president and a director is John Wildes who is associated with the AED, the Woodlawn Foundation (below) and the Castlewood Foundation. Its assets are more than \$5 million. It was formed in 2009. It holds and runs religious retreats for men and women, educational camps for boys and girls, and educational workshops for men and women. Charles Cushnie is the Secretary/Treasurer and is associated also with the Euclid Foundation, the Castlewood Foundation, the AED, and the Woodlawn Foundation. The books are kept by Gregory G. Giebler, who is also attached to the Windmoor Foundation,



AED, the Lincoln Green Foundation, and the Woodlawn Foundation.

- **Woodlawn Foundation** – With assets running about \$39 million, the foundation is a key player in Opus Dei U.S. and international financing. The Rockside Foundation, also located in New Rochelle, NY, acts as a conduit to funnel money into Woodlawn. Woodlawn, in turn, provides funding for more than 40 of Opus Dei's non-profit corporations. Projects include grants for new male numerary residences and study centers like Windmoor and for international projects like the Saxum Conference Center near Jerusalem. It has no members. John M. Wildes is its vice-president and serves as a director. Gregory G. Gelder is secretary of Woodlawn and a trustee of Rockside. Timothy C. Hogan is an officer of both the Woodlawn and Rockside Foundations. His address is the Murry Hill Place.
- **Work of God (Opus Dei, Inc.)** – The last of the Opus Dei charitable foundations listed at the same Keating Avenue address of the Association for Educational Development (AED) was created in 1949 in Brookfield, WI. It has been administratively dissolved, but the Opus Dei Layton Study Center next door serves male youth and professional men in the Milwaukee area.

Is your head swimming yet? Do you understand why Opus Dei's corporate maze makes it almost impossible to track and identify Opus Dei "apostolates?"

### **Opus Dei Corporate Communications and Media Empire**

Before I end this article, there is one more area that needs to be explored if our conclusions are to make sense, and that area is the importance of media control, public relations, and communications, and the formation of public opinion in the life of the Prelature, which, we are told, concerns itself only with the doctrinal, spiritual and pastoral aspects of Opus Dei life and not with its practical and professional management.

In this way, Opus Dei can never be held responsible for any evil actions or evil consequences issuing forth from Opus Dei "apostolates," regardless of how systemic and ingrained those evils are.

### **Opus Dei's Control of the Vatican Press**

In 1984, Dr. Joaquin Navarro-Valls, an Opus Dei Spanish numerary, a medical mnternist and psychiatrist, and professional journalist and communication specialist became the first Director of the Vatican Press Office. With the gaining of this office, Opus Dei gained unlimited and unimpeded access to Pope John Paul II, a long-time friend of the Prelature since his early days as the Auxiliary Bishop of Kraków. Thus, Opus Dei played a major role in the making and shaping of the pope's media image.

According to Robert Hutchison, author of *Their Kingdom Come* (1997), a critical analysis of Opus Dei's international financial and corporate works not covered in this article, the ascendancy of Navarro-Valls opened the door to the Prelature's increased influence on Vatican Radio, *l'Osservatore Romano*, and the Vatican Publishing House, and insured the rise of Opus Dei as a powerhouse in the administration of the Holy See for the next 22 years. Navarro-Valls is currently associated with another Opus Dei enterprise, the Biomedical University, specializing in biomedical engineering and medicine. Its doctrinal and spiritual formation is entrusted to the Prelature of [Opus Dei](#), just so you know.

In 2006, Pope Benedict XVI appointed Rev. Federico Lombardi, S.J., to replace Navarro-Valls in a temporary shift of power from Opus Dei to the Jesuits, but Opus Dei continued to have a source of access to the Papal Office and Vatican Press Office in the person of Father Georg Gänswein (now Archbishop), the Personal Secretary of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and Prefect of the Papal Household for Pope Francis. Gänswein served as a Professor of Canon Law at the Opus Dei Pontifical University of the Holy Cross after he joined Cardinal Ratzinger's staff at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1996.

On July 11, 2016, the slight gap in Opus Dei's Vatican media/communications power was fully restored when Opus Dei numerary, Dr. Greg Burke, became the Deputy Director of the Vatican Press Office. Burke had previously served as a public relations man for the Vatican Secretariat of State. In a lengthy interview he gave to reporters in 2012 when he was hired by the Vatican, Burke asked out loud, "Am I being hired because I'm in Opus Dei?" and coyly replied, "It might come into play."

### **Opus Dei's School of Social Institutional Communications**

In October 1984, Opus Dei established the Pontifical Atheneum of the Holy Cross in Rome to expand research and formation in the "ecclesiastic sciences." In July 1998, Pope John Paul II granted it the title of 'University' making it the sixth Pontifical University in Rome.

Today, the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross has four Schools including the School of Social Institutional Communication, which bills itself as an "effective instrument for formation and research;" and the Center of Research into the Relationship Between Family and Mass Media. The latter, like all of Opus Dei's John Paul II Institutes on Marriage and Family, is unabashedly ironic considering the war that Opus Dei makes on the natural family (excluding Opus Dei families), which is another story for another day.

The School of Social Institutional Communications includes specialized courses on Public Opinion, Audiovisual Communications, and Media Relations. Its students internship at the World Youth Day information office, Italy, (WYD is a major recruiting platform for Opus Dei); Radio Sololá (Guatemala/Opus Dei dominated); Vatican Information Service (Opus Dei); Catholic Information Center ,USA (Opus Dei);,; Eternal Word Television Network, USA (favorable to Opus Dei and Opus Dei priests); La Voce del Popolo (Italy), and the Information Office of the Sanctuary of Torreciudad (Spain), an Opus Dei shrine.

### **Opus Dei – A Major Player in International Media and Communications**

One of the best ways of impressing the reader as to the magnitude and importance Opus Dei places on media control, public relations and communications is to give an example of one of its international media conferences, this one held on November 11-13, 2016, at Chartered Accounts House, in Dublin, Ireland, under the auspices of the Opus Dei Cleraum University Study Center in Dublin.

The Cleraum Media Conference is a forum for Irish, English, American and European media personal, news reporters and journalists, to discuss ethical and professional issues and explore new media tools, new technologies, and new audiences. The 16th Cleraum Conference featured two masterclasses, one with famed British documentary filmmaker, George Carey, and one with American-born Pulitzer Prize investigative reporter, Carol Leonnig. Other featured news topics included digital strategies, and the power of social media.

The Cleraum forum attracts about 120 leading national and international journalists, reporters, film and television producers every two years to Dublin, and has grown in stature since its creation in 1986.

The School of Communication in Rome and the Cleraum Media Conference are only two examples of Opus Dei-controlled vast media interlock of radio and television broadcast and communications networks. Opus Dei has also been at the cutting edge of the internet and social media networks creating numerous web sites and blogs (many anonymous) sponsored by Opus Dei members as well as Opus Dei cooperators.

The reader will want to remember the obvious importance the Prelature of Opus Dei places on modern media strategies in a digital age as we turn our attention back to Michael Voris and his media empire – St. Michael's Media, RealCatholicTV, Concept Communication, LLC and Concept Productions and Church Militant.

## The Truth About Voris and His Opus Dei Connections

The city of Detroit, where Voris established his media groupings has never been an Opus Dei stronghold. The Prelature, to this date, does not have a center there, although it has not been from a total lack of effort on the part of Opus Dei.

In or about 2006, Opus Dei established a Center at 22007 Woodward Avenue in Ferndale, MI. The Center housed several "Opus Dei" apostolates, and had a beautiful Oratory where Mass was said. Members lived in a nearby residential neighborhood in designated houses.

Archbishop Adam J. Maida, however, wasn't notified of the Opus Dei presence in his archdiocese. How is this possible? When dealing with the Prelature it's always good to read the fine print.

Although the Prelature is required to obtain the prior permission of the local ordinary for the establishment of a canonically-erected center, this is not a requirement for a dependent/subordinate non-canonically erected center. Opus Dei is a universal diocese without geographic boundaries and can redefine its boundaries to suit its purpose. And it did just this in Detroit.

The result was that it wasn't until the spring of 2012 that Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron, who had replaced the retired Archbishop Maida in January of 2009, discovered the Center and eventually closed it down.

Now, does the address of the now-defunct Opus Dei center located at 22007 Woodward Avenue in Ferndale ring a bell?

Probably not, unless you had an occasion to do business with Michael Voris **before** he moved into his new Church Militant production facility at 2840 Hilton Road in Ferndale in 2012.

That's because 22007 Woodward Avenue was the original address for Voris corporations including St. Michael's Media, RealCatholicTV, Concept Communication, LLC and Concept Productions before Voris moved to his new headquarters.

So, we know that Opus Dei started a Center in the Archdiocese of Detroit in or about 2006; that the Center was located at the same address as Michael Voris' media entities; that the Center had an Oratory for Mass and the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; and that Opus Dei sponsored various religious and secular events there.

This means that Michael Voris has had an intimate and very long relationship with the Prelature.

What we don't know is, what was Voris' exact relationship within the Prelature? Was he a lay celibate numerary? An associate of some kind? Was he a cooperator? Does Voris currently hold a membership in Opus Dei? If not, what are the circumstances leading to his exit from the Prelature? Was it one of convenience or cover-up or separation?

Concerning Voris' St. Michael's Media, was it and is it an Opus Dei "apostolate?" Michael is Voris' middle name, but it is also the name of one of the three Archangel patrons of Opus Dei.

There are still many other unanswered questions about the men behind the Opus Dei curtain including a very basic question – Did E. Michael Jones really write *The Man Behind the Curtain*? I think the question list is endless.

I don't know the answers to all these questions and frankly at this point in the game I'm beyond caring. But I think I can say without contradiction that the charade is over.

Jones and Brammer, Nicholson, and Voris and all their other associates as well as the Prelature of Opus Dei have played us all for fools, and Jones, at least, has made a financial killing on Amazon as part of the deal. How much we won't know until he files his next 990 IRS form for Ultramontane Associates, Inc.

### **What's Opus Dei's Endgame?**

On March 30, 2017, *The Wanderer* carried an article by Christopher Manion titled "Clericalism Continues to Thrive in the Church," which quotes Opus Dei supernumerary, Russell Shaw, although he is not identified as such, on the subject. Here are some quotes by Shaw:

... the illness of clericalism has been with us for so long that most of us take it for granted. In fact, we're clericalists ourselves."

Clericalism is a "caricature," ... "It fosters an ecclesiastical caste system in which clerics compromise the dominant elite, with lay people serving as a passive, inert mass of spear -carriers tasked with receiving clerical tutelage and doing what they're told.

...we're clericalists ourselves – and we are its victims.

Ironically, if one did not know that the comments were being made by a high-level member of Opus Dei, one could almost take the comments as a description of the Prelature itself.

Manion goes on to state that Shaw's perspective (which is actually Opus Dei's perspective, but hidden from the reader) explains the terrible state of AmChurch today because "clericalism spawns two popular myths: first, that the only way to have a truly religious calling is to work in an official capacity in the institutional Church; and second, that the opinions of clerics are superior to those of the laity, not only on matters of faith and morals, but on prudential questions regarding social and political issues as well."

After listing a litany of complaints, all of which are valid, against AmChurch's liberal bureaucracy, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and its anti-life adjuncts including Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Charities, Manion reminds Wanderer readers that it's "the meek, passive laity who must pay for it all... Until we don't."

That's right folks... don't give money to the big bad wolf, "the institutional Church." Give it, instead, to Opus Dei, who, in the immortal words of Michael Voris "will save the Church."

Is it any wonder that Opus Dei should have an interest in both Jones' and Voris' media programs which expose the "institutional Church's very real defects, thereby opening up new avenues of recruitment among the Catholic laity for Opus Dei?

### **What's Opus Dei's Endgame?**

Ultimately, I believe the answer to the above question is to put an Opus Dei prelate on the throne of St. Peter, and fashion an Opus Dei Church outside of which there is no salvation – a new Church with a recast Priesthood, a recast Gospel, a recast Magisterium, and an absolute subservient recast Laity.

When Robert Hutchison titled his book, **"Their** Kingdom Come," he wasn't just whistling Dixie.

**Opus Dei is not of God. It is of Satan. Opus uses the Catholic Church for its own ends which are money**

**and power. Their secret, self-contained, self-perpetuating, and robotic conformity are indicative of a cult. In discerning the real nature of Opus Dei, one must not listen to what the Prelature says, but rather look at what it does.**

In the end, the only obvious question left for **all** the men hiding behind the Opus Dei curtain and all of Opus Dei's members and cooperators world-wide, and for the reader is, "Who will you serve? God or Opus Dei?"

One must eventually choose. I know Who my choice will be. "Do you?"

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